

made his choice. At last he took a deep breath and he chose yellow peppers, runner beans, rhubarb and squash plants. "I can't wait to get started!" he told the landowner as they walked down the hill, arm in arm!

## Notes for home groups leaders on Jonah 3

Read Jonah 3

1. How would you have felt if you were Jonah and had just been vomited out of a fish? How would you feel about God and his plans for the world – your part and the part of the people of Nineveh? How might you have felt when you heard God command you to go to Nineveh?

2. Reflect then on the significance of 40 in the Bible and the idea of being cleansed and made ready for a climax at the end.

- Noah in the ark when it rained for 40 days
- The people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years
- Elijah for 40 days after escaping from Jezebel and Ahab
- Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days
- Jesus with his disciples for 40 days after the resurrection

Talk about any period of cleansing and renewal people have experienced, which may have gone on for more than a literal 40 days, months, years. Does it bear any similarity to the experiences of these Bible characters?

3. Jonah was dull in the way he obeyed God and in the way he engaged with God's plan for the world. (More of that in next Sunday's service!) How fair is it to see him in that light? Reflect on what we know of God's plan for us and the world. How energetically do we engage with that or are we dull in our response?

4. If appropriate, pray for the role that parents/grandparents/youth workers have in passing on Christian faith to the next generation since they are part of God's plan.

5. There are two possible endings to the story of the man who lived at the bottom of the hill. Read them and wonder which you most identify with.

**Either:** The next spring, just before the last frosts, the landowner called by to see the man. "I have brought you some yellow pepper plants for you to grow this year. But if you like, you can choose lots of other different varieties." The man shook his head. One year of change was enough. He was going back to his tomatoes. So the landowner went away with his yellow pepper plants and the promise of all the other plants the man could have chosen.

**Or:** The next spring, just before the last frosts, the landowner called by to see the man. "I have brought you some yellow pepper plants for you to grow this year. But if you like, you can choose lots of other different varieties." The man sighed. How could he choose?

So he asked the landowner if he could go up the hill with him again, just to be reminded of what the great plan was and then he would choose. "That's a great idea," the landowner said. "Let's go now." So up the hill they went, talking all the time and the man learnt so much about the plans of the landowner and when they got to the top, he was so excited to see what was already happening in the houses around the hill. He scratched his head as he